

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 113990

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TO WHITE HOUSE FLASH

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EXDIS - TOSEC 1193

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, XF, US

WHITE HOUSE PLEASE PASS SAM 86790

SUBJECT: EC/ARAB DIALOGUE: EC-9 POLITICAL COMMITTEE

DISCUSSION

REF: BONN 8567

FROM SONNENFELDT AND STABLER

SUMMARY. THIS MESSAGE SUMMARIZES WHERE WE STAND ON THE
EC/ARAB DIALOGUE AND RECOMMENDS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION A
RESPONSE TO THE EC-9 REQUEST FOR OUR REACTIONS TO THE PC
DECISIONS OF MAY 27-28. END SUMMARY.

1. BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS: AS YOU RECALL, EC-9 FOREIGN
MINISTERS DECIDED MARCH 4 TO SEEK BROADSCALE COOPERATION
AGREEMENT WITH ARAB LEAGUE NATIONS. THEY AGREED TO PURSUE
ARRANGEMENT IN THREE STAGES: 1) EXPLORATORY CONVERSATIONS,
2) WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND 3) EC/ARAB FOREIGN
MINISTERS MEETING TO FINALIZE ARRANGEMENT IF STEPS 1 AND 2
SUCCESSFUL. OUR UNHAPPINESS WITH EC-9 FAILURE TO CONSULT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 113990

US IN ADVANCE ON THEIR PLANS, CHANGE OF GOVERNMENTS IN KEY

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, AND CONTINUING OPEC EMBARGO ON OIL TO NETHERLANDS AND DENMARK CAUSED NINE TO PUT ASIDE INITIATIVE TEMPORARILY. NEW BRITISH LABOR GOVERNMENT GAVE ITS EVENTUAL APPROVAL, BUT ON CONDITION THAT THE NINE PROCEED IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH US. FRENCH UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THIS PROVISION CAUSED FURTHER DELAY. EC-9 POLITICAL DIRECTORS HAVE OBVIOUSLY NOW DECIDED TO RESUME INITIATIVE AND WE HAVE REPORTS THAT THEY ALL AGREED (INCLUDING FRENCH) TO CONSULT WITH THE US. WHETHER THIS MEANS MORE THAN VAN WELL NOTIFICATION TO US IN BONN IS UNCLEAR. PC DECISION INFORM EGYPTIANS BY JUNE 1 IN ORDER TO SEEK LIFTING OF EMBARGO ON DUTCH AND DANES AT JUNE 2 OPEC MEETING DOES NOT APPEAR BY ITSELF TO BE ADVERSE TO OUR INTERESTS. EVENTUAL RESUMPTION OF EC INITIATIVE HAS ALWAYS BEEN ENVISAGED BY THE COMMUNITY, AND SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES FROM OUR STANDPOINT ARE TIMING, TACTICS, AND CONTENT OF THREE STAGES WHICH WILL LEAD TO EC/ARAB ARRANGEMENT.

2. FIRST OPTION: (A) THE EC-9 HAVE GIVEN US SHORT DEADLINE FOR COMMENTING ON THEIR DECISION TO INFORM THE EGYPTIANS THAT THE EC-9 MINISTERS WILL BE DECIDING ON JUNE 10-11 TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE ARAB INITIATIVE. WE CAN SAY THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE AND SEEK TO THROW THEM OFF BALANCE AGAIN CONCERNING THE CONSULTATIONS ISSUE. HOWEVER, THE NINE ARE AT THIS POINT SIGNALING AN INTENTION TO RESUME THEIR INITIATIVE AND THERE IS STILL TIME FOR THEM TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF US CONCERNS. THIS APPROACH WOULD ALSO PUT THE ONUS ON THE US IF OPEC DOES NOT LIFT OIL EMBARGO.

3. SECOND OPTION: (B) WE WOULD NOT SEEK TO BLOCK THE EC APPROACH TO THE EGYPTIANS ON JUNE 1 AND INSTEAD EMPHASIZE OUR WISH TO CONSULT WITH THE EC PRIOR TO THE JUNE 10-LL FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING. WE COULD REQUEST PROMPT CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, BETWEEN US AND EC-9 ON QUESTIONS OF EC/ARAB TIMING, TACTICS, AND CONTENT. AT THE SAME TIME, WE COULD SAY THAT WE SEE EC-9 WILLINGNESS TO CONSULT ON THIS ISSUE AS A TEST OF "GYMNICH" CONSENSUS. THIS WOULD CLEARLY PLACE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 113990

THE BURDEN ON THE EUROPEANS FOR CONSULTING AND WOULD UNDERLINE OUR VIEW THAT WE EXPECT CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO IMPORTANT DECISIONS BY THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS AFFECTING US INTERESTS.

4. PROPOSED REPLY TO BONN: WE RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF OPTION B AS MOST CONSISTENT WITH OUR LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES AND REQUEST YOUR APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO BONN.

(1) YOU SHOULD TELL VAN WELL THAT, WHILE THE SECRETARY WILL NOT OBJECT TO EC-9 INFORMING EGYPTIANS THAT THEY ARE PREPARING TO CARRY FORWARD WITH THEIR COOPERATION INITIATIVE, HE STILL HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THIS ENTIRE EXERCISE. SECRETARY WOULD HOPE THAT THE NINE WILL NOT

DISCUSS MODALITIES OF THIS INITIATIVE WITH EGYPTIANS OR OTHER ARAB STATES UNTIL US AND EC-9 CAN CONSULT.

(2) IN REFERRING TO INDICATIONS THAT THE EC-9 INDEED WISH TO CONSULT ON THIS MATTER, YOU SHOULD ALSO TELL VAN WELL THAT SECRETARY FEELS STRONGLY THAT WE SHOULD CONSULT ON EC-9 INITIATIVE IN SOME DETAIL PRIOR TO THE JUNE 10-11 MEETING. ASSUMING DECISION BY MINISTERS AT THAT MEETING TO MOVE FORWARD, WE WOULD ALSO EXPECT CONTINUING CLOSE CONSULTATIONS AS DIALOGUE DEVELOPS. SECRETARY SEES THESE CONSULTATIONS AS IMPORTANT TEST OF NEW SPIRIT WHICH WE SEEK.

(3) WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM THE EC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE HOW THEY WISH TO PROCEED WITH THESE CONSULTATIONS.
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